

the meantime, if there is anyone else within sound or sight who wishes to propose an amendment, we invite their presence.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### VISIT TO THE SENATE BY EVGENEY S. SAVCHENKO, MEM- BER OF THE RUSSIAN SENATE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have the distinct pleasure of having a visitor on the floor of the Senate today, the Honorable Mr. Evgeney S. Savchenko, who is a Senator in the Russian Senate. He is also the chairman of the agriculture committee, the Committee of the Council of Federation for the Agrarian Policy. In other words, it is the Senate Agriculture Committee for the entire Russian Federation.

We are delighted to have Mr. Savchenko here.

He also holds another position, Mr. President. He is Governor of the Belgorod region of the Russian Federation. I thought the occupant of the chair might be delighted to know that in Russia, when you are elected a Governor of a region or Governor of a state, you automatically become a senator. So, therefore, you can fulfill both positions at the same time.

I know the occupant of the chair, in his former life, was the chairman of the Agriculture Committee of the House of Representatives. So I know that the occupant of the chair, the distinguished Senator from Kansas, would have a lot to discuss, I am sure, in terms of agriculture with Mr. Savchenko who is the chairman of the agriculture committee of the Russian Federation.

I am delighted to have him here and present on the Senate floor today.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, we have today an opportunity to discuss and to ultimately vote on, I think, one of the more important issues, both sub-

stantively and philosophically, within the Department of the Interior appropriations bill, that having to do with the future of Federal-State-local partnerships that have existed now for some years with the National Endowment for the Arts and funding for the arts in America.

There are some who would suggest that somehow this is an elitist enterprise that involves large cities in urban areas. Coming from the State of South Dakota, I can assure my colleagues that the NEA and the funding that has gone to my home State of South Dakota has been absolutely critical as seed money for the promotion and the development of artistic efforts that have benefited virtually every school district, virtually every county, and community across my very large and rural State.

We have, as so many States do, a great deal of artistic talent, commitment to the arts, but we don't have a lot of corporate sponsors, we don't have a lot of philanthropists, we don't have a lot of sources for funding that can create the seed money that we need for the arts to blossom, to bloom in places like South Dakota.

The function of this funding has been absolutely critical in our State. It has gone to our school and communities, our touring artists, artisan school programs. It has gone for our Arts Corps Program for South Dakota's juvenile correctional facilities in partnership with our Department of Corrections and the South Dakota Arts Council. It has gone for the Indian services to sponsor the Northern Plains tribal art show and market, which has created a whole new environment, a whole new series of opportunities for Northern Plains Native Americans to develop their artistic skills and to market those skills. It has gone for our Youth at Risk Program. It has gone for our Arts in the Classroom Teachers' Conference, and it has created a whole new environment for the arts in our State.

When I look back at what existed prior to 1965 when the NEA was created, we had people with great artistic talent in the State then, too, but we didn't have the structure to really promote the arts. Now, thanks to the seed money of the NEA over the years, we have in place the South Dakota Arts Council, we have in place the South Dakota Museum Association, the Rural Arts Presenting Program, Dakota Prairie Playhouse, the Black Hills Chamber Music Society for Big Sioux Arts Council. We have literally pages of arts organizations that now exist in every county, in virtually every community of our State that did not exist prior to the creation of the NEA.

So, Mr. President, I can't emphasize too much the importance of this organization to enhance the quality of life for those who would otherwise not have great opportunities to experience performance art or art of any kind without this. I think we need to keep in mind that the issue here is really a

philosophic one and not so much a budget issue.

There is \$100 million involved here for the Nation's entire artistic effort, less, I might add, relative to the budget and that of any other Western industrialized nation on Earth, but that portion of money has gone a long, long ways in our country. And, in fact, to keep this in some sort of perspective, we are going to be debating later on this month a defense appropriations bill where there are those in conference who would like us to purchase nine more B-2 bombers at a cost of \$1 billion apiece. Our entire arts program, that goes to every school, every county and every city in our Nation costs one-tenth of one bomber. It costs less than it would cost to maintain this fleet of aircraft that the Pentagon does not even want.

So this is, relative to the entire budget, a modest effort, less than what other countries devote, but yet crucially, crucially important, not just for large urban areas and large artistic organizations, but for those of us in rural America who find this an absolute lifeline.

It is certainly my hope that by the time we conclude the debate on the Interior appropriations bill today that we will find our way to insist that there continues to be a strong Federal-local, public-private partnership in the arts that has gone on now for over 30 years and which has been responsible, I think, for an enormous amount of very constructive, positive effort for our children, for the quality of life in our communities, big and small.

I know that there are several amendments pending. I won't go into detail about each of them, other than to say, again, I certainly ask my colleagues to very carefully review these amendments. It is critical that when the day is done that we continue to have modest but responsible funding for the arts in the United States. I yield the floor.

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

#### UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, the following request has been cleared.

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate considers Senator BRYAN's amendment regarding forest roads, there be 90 minutes equally divided in the usual form. I further ask unanimous consent that no second-degree amendment be in order to the Bryan amendment. I further ask unanimous consent that following the expiration or yielding back of time, a vote occur on the amendment at a time to be determined by the two leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I understand that Senator BRYAN is on his way to the floor to begin that debate. I believe that the principal opponents of the amendment have also been notified. In any event, they should proceed immediately to the floor to engage in